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DCI/IC 1591/75

11 June 1975

X1 [ ] Director  
Center for the Study of Intelligence  
Office of Training/CIA

X1 [ ]  
X1 Thank you for your note of May 28th and for the opportunity to comment on the paper attached. Although [ ] has been temporarily detached for duty with the State Department, I am sure he would want to provide a timely response. I have, therefore, taken the liberty of answering in his place.

X1 The memo for the project on Intelligence Support for the Conduct of Foreign Policy appears both interesting and timely. As you may recall from your discussion with [ ] and myself, we are most interested in the consumer satisfaction aspect of the intelligence business. Your initial efforts are, therefore, of direct interest to us. Please keep us informed.

I would like to add a couple of thoughts with respect to the comments and observations you forwarded with your note:

- Overall, in the examination of the impact of intelligence on foreign policy formulation, I recommend that the Intelligence Community be considered as a whole. If this seems too broad to handle at first, you might examine CIA's role as a part of the total Intelligence Community's role.

- The first statement about the improving quality of CIA's product may be true, but I have not seen any product quality measures (data) or any quality control criteria. I also question the validity of the statement about the slight increase in intelligence being used in policy formulation. Is there data to support this allegation? What are the measures of product utilization in policy formulation?

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• Defining policy makers and characterizing the difference between them and producers are long-standing intelligence issues. One approach to obtaining consumer feedback would be to define a set of consumers (probably somewhat artificial, but nevertheless, defined) and then to use a sampling procedure (questionnaire) to ascertain consumer satisfaction, utilization or whatever. The NSCIC Working Group seems like a likely candidate to "broker" the consumer satisfaction determination. Perhaps your working group should devise the methods and experiment with the process prior to NSCIC implementation.

• While I agree that policymakers and analysts tend to live in different worlds, I believe that the truly successful analyst is usually one who has somehow bridged the gap between producer and consumer. It is the successful analyst who appreciates the policy-maker's needs, not the one who sits back and waits for a request "for information."

• It is, I feel, important for analysts to realize the characteristics of a policy decision situation: decisions are time sensitive and must be made in the time context of the problem. The decision maker typically operates through a rather narrow window. He can't afford to decide prematurely or delay too long. Furthermore, true decisions are made in an atmosphere of uncertainty. To dogmatically insist on having all possible information available before making a decision is to avoid making one-- it reduces the decision maker's task to merely approving, and leaves the real decision making to someone else. This is particularly true when the decision maker is wholly dependent on analysts for inputs, less so when he is actually part of the analytical process (e.g., when the decision maker is sensitive to the "politics" or "externalities" of a situation). Finally, it is the decision maker who has to bear the burden of post-decisional conflict--did he do the right thing? A perceptive analyst knows this about the decision making process and the decision maker himself. He knows that, since decision makers

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have a relatively high tolerance for risk and uncertainty, they tend to decide on the basis of what's available at the time they must "walk through the window." (Have you ever noticed how really important decisions--especially in crisis situations--are time dominated?) What this all comes down to is that the responsibility for gaining access, establishing rapport and bridging the chasm falls more heavily on the analyst than it does on the decision maker. To expect it to be otherwise is to be complacent in the extreme. That's why "good analysts" are so much in demand. When a decision maker says "get me a good analyst" what he's really saying is, "get me an analyst who understands what I need." Technical competence is a given, but perceptivity is sought out.

● I'm not sure I agree with the paper's last paragraph. If, by presentation and packaging, you mean ink on paper you may be correct. But if you mean all the ways available to communicate, we are neither sophisticated nor are we there. I suggest that both the message and the medium need constant attention to meet consumer needs.

I was pleased to see that [ ] participated in your discussions. As you know, Dick and his division wrestle on a daily basis with the kinds of questions raised in your paper. Thanks for the opportunity to comment - I hope your research team finds the above helpful.

25X

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